



Report title

Training Contract: Babcock Performance - Quarter2, 2012/13

Meeting

Resources Committee

Date

12 November 2012

Report by

Commissioner for Fire and Emergency Planning
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Summary

This is the second in a series of quarterly updates for Members of the Resources Committee, detailing Babcock's performance in relation to delivery of the outsourced training contract.

Data in this report covers the second quarter of 2012/13 from 1 July 2012 to 30 September 2012 inclusive.

Recommendation

That the report be received.

Summary

1. This report specifically details Babcock's performance relating to:

Training Delivery

Classes programmed against actual delivery and delegates attended for all training including watch based and non station based training.

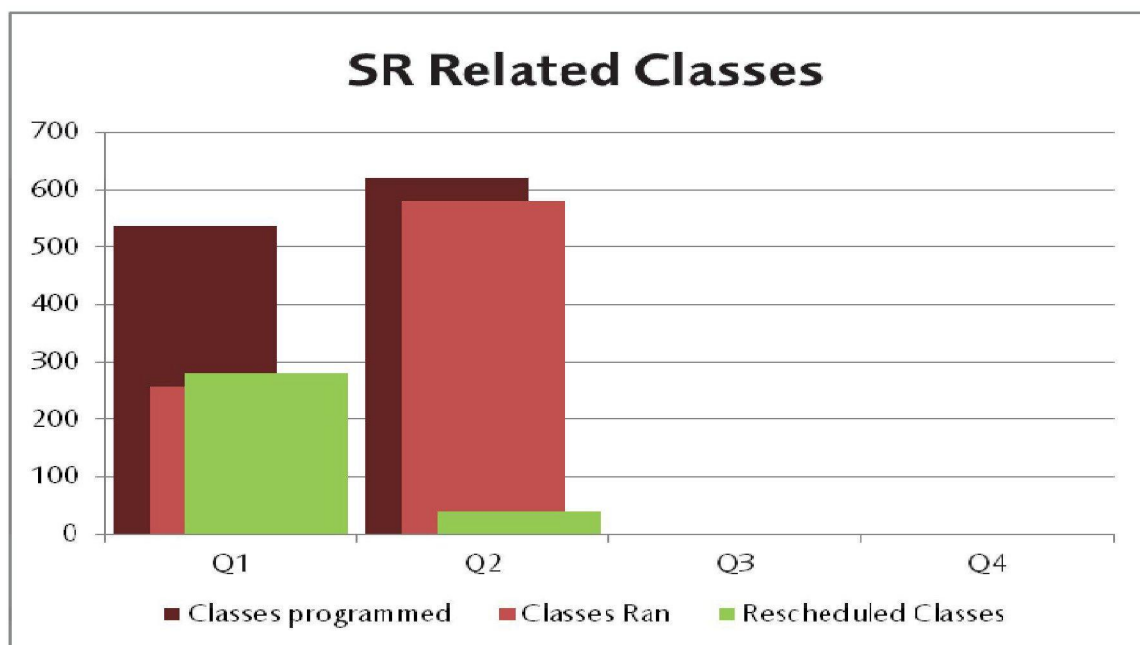
Quality assurance

Classes assured, themes identified and action taken.

Performance monitoring

2. Delegates are allocated to classes either as part of a crew on appliances (strategic resource -SR) or an individual basis where a specific training need has been identified (planned release of personnel – PROP). The majority of core skills and refresher training is delivered on SR, whereas the majority of training for non-station based staff is delivered on PROP. The performance reporting for SR only contains delegate attendance figures as there are no predetermined class sizes. The figures provided throughout this report are subject to final reconciliation with Babcock. Any variances will be minimal and will be covered in the report on quarter 3 performance.

Chart 1: Babcock's training delivery performance, quarters 1 and 2 - 2012/13 (SR related classes)

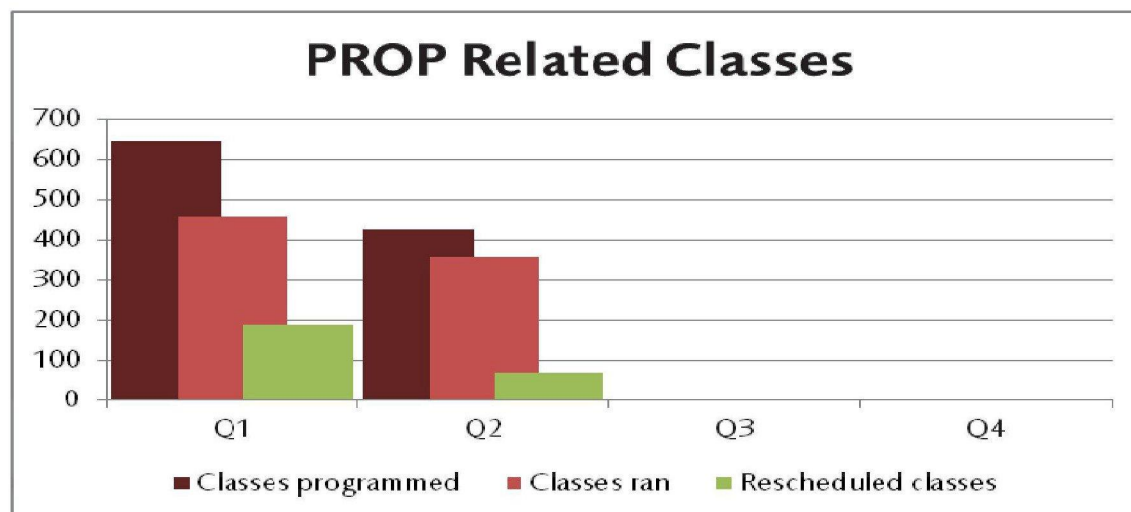


3. In quarter 2 Babcock delivered 580 classes on SR compared to 256 classes in quarter 1. This equates to an additional 324 classes in quarter 2 which was an increase of 126.56%.
4. During quarter 2, only 40 of the 620 SR classes were rescheduled (6.45%) of which 11 (1.77% of all programmed courses) have been attributed to Babcock. These comprise of non-availability of trainers (8),

venues (2) and equipment (1). This compares to quarter 1 when 281 of 1,537 classes programmed were rescheduled (52.33%).

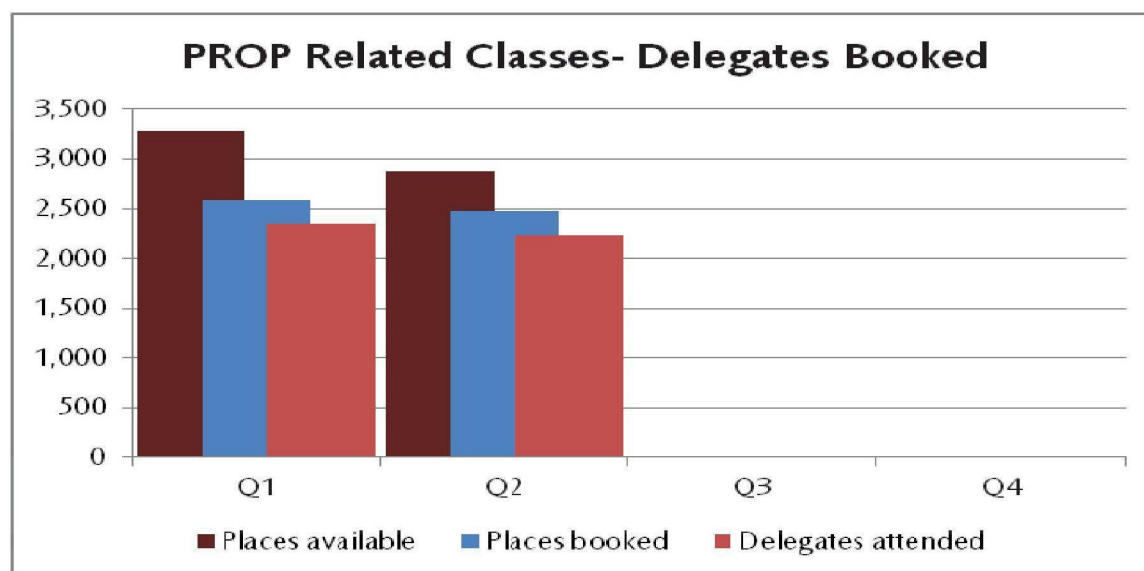
5. In addition during the second quarter, 3,623 delegates were trained compared to 2,051 in quarter 1. This equates to an additional 1,572 delegates being trained which was an increase of 76.64%.

Chart 2: Babcock's training delivery performance, quarters 1 and 2 - 2012/13 (PROP related classes)



6. The above reflects the usual reduction in courses over the summer period when release for staff to attend training is reduced as staff leave is at its highest. During this summer, release was constrained further to maximise staff availability to support the brigade's commitments during the Olympic and Paralympic Games. In quarter 2 Babcock delivered 357 classes on PROP compared to 457 classes in quarter 1.
7. During quarter 2, 70 of the 427 PROP classes were rescheduled (16.39%) of which 3 (0.7% of all PROP courses) were attributed to Babcock. These relate to the non-availability of trainers. This compares to quarter 1 when 188 out of 645 classes programmed were rescheduled (29.15%).

Chart 3: Babcock's training delivery performance, quarters 1 and 2 - 2012/13 (PROP related classes – delegates booked)



8. In addition during the second quarter, 2,472 delegates were booked on classes of which 2,232 attended (90.29%) compared with 2,585 delegated being booked on classes on quarter 1 of which 2,347 attended (90.79%).
9. When SR and PROP training is combined, Babcock delivered 937 classes in quarter 2 compared to 713 classes in quarter 1. The additional 224 classes provided in quarter 2 represents an increase of 31.4%. Delegates attending training rose from 4398 to 5855 an increase of 33.13%.
10. Babcock is expected to deliver the full training delivery plan by the end of quarter 4. Babcock intend to achieve this by maximising training capacity including delivery of training at weekends, which was not utilised when training was delivered in-house. Consequently, the use of training at weekends will spread the release of front line staff for training.

Training delivery – performance points to note

11. Whilst Babcock's performance in quarter 2 rose by 31.4% for classes and 33.13% for delegates, they still experienced some operational difficulties which are explored in paragraphs 11 to 17.

Venue issues

12. The issue previously reported in connection with the availability of a venue for large animal rescue training has been resolved. Refurbishment works at the Royal Veterinary College were completed at the beginning of September and the College is now fully operational. A review of the course content for large animal training is currently underway and, once complete, classes will be added to the training delivery plan.
13. Babcock have secured additional facilities at Gatwick Airport (BA and real fire training); Kempton Park race course and Chatham docks (High volume pumping training); and the facilities at the Fire Service College (Leadership and management/urban search and rescue training) to support training delivery. Babcock has been advised that they need to find an alternative venue to Chatham docks within the London area as the training delivered at this venue has a travel time criteria which was set out in the Authority's training requirements i.e. crews should not be travelling more than 45 minutes to a high volume pumping training venue. The use of Chatham should, therefore, cease with effect from 31 December 2012.
14. Babcock have also been experiencing difficulties with availability of the Kempton Park race course, which has impacted on HVP training (see table 1 below). As a result, Babcock are now using an additional site at Stoke Newington.
15. In addition, the provision of the two dedicated facilities at Park Royal and Beckton will resolve venue issues in the longer term.

Trainer issues

16. Since the last quarterly report, the majority of issues relating to the provision of trainers have been resolved. There were 4 occasions in early July where courses had to be rescheduled due to a lack of trainers. There have been no further occurrences since then. Babcock is in the process of multiskilling trainers and maximising course capacity through the use of weekend training, which should ensure the successful delivery of the revised training delivery programme in quarters 3 and 4.

Resource issues

17. In September, one of the mobile real fire training units became defective, which resulted in the loss of a number of breathing apparatus and real fire training (BARFT) classes (see table 1). The unit has now been repaired. However, this event has highlighted the requirement for Babcock to develop more robust contingency plans to ensure that high volume courses of this nature are not adversely affected by equipment failures. Babcock is currently exploring alternative means of providing BARFT classes which could include the use of facilities at City airport. Babcock intend to submit a proposal to LFB by the end of October 2012 recommending the use of this site.
18. As reported in quarter 1 training delivery performance data focuses on the provision of core skills and refresher training as this impacts on fire-fighter safety, fire-fighter performance and succession planning for skills and establishment purposes at fire stations. Table1 details quarter 1 and 2 performance for core skills and refresher training.

Table 1: Babcock's training delivery performance, core refresher training quarters 1 and 2, 2012/13

Training curricula	Transport	BARFT	IEC	Line Ops	Water Rescue	USAR	HVP	Mass Decon
Qtr 1 – classes programmed	94	109	224	41	11	46	48	8
Qtr 1 – classes ran	75	53	103	1	10	16	12	3
Qtr 1 - % of classes ran	79.79	48.62	45.98	2.44	90.91	34.78	25.00	37.50
Qtr 2 – classes programmed	52	118	308	58	6	16	32	9
Qtr 2 – classes ran	50	85	297	55	6	10	18	7
Qtr 2 - % of classes ran	96.15	72.03	94.43	94.83	100	87.50	56.25	77.78
Trend indicator	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
No. of classes remaining to meet 2012/13 TDP	207	245	782	88	33	77	174	48
No. of delegates trained to date	206	1,400	2,411	247	156	233	304	141
No. of	373	3,580	4,753	483	387	707	1,518	703

delegates to be trained								
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19. Table1 illustrates that Babcock has responded to the request to improve performance in the delivery of core refresher training within quarter 2. Performance stands at 88.12% compared with 46.99% for the first quarter. The green trend indicator within the table shows that numbers increased and that the direction of travel is positive. Whilst class volume levels are lower than at the same time in previous years it has always been Babcock's intention to back load the delivery of the majority of classes into quarters 3 and 4. The detail relating to the delivery of the number of classes remaining is contained in Babcock's existing resource model. These figures are expected to improve with the maximisation of training delivery at weekends.

Quality Assurance – performance points to note

20. A team within Human Resource and Development Department carry out initial proactive planned audits and follow up audits where issues have been raised by third parties or to monitor issues that were previously identified. In quarter 2, the team carried out 84 audits; 57 of these were initial audits with a further 27 being follow-ups. To date 154 audits have been undertaken which equates to 42 % of the training delivery plan to date. These audits involve attending the class and assessing whether or not it meets the Brigade's accepted standards.

21. The QA team measure classes in terms of:

- **How the class was opened** – assuring that health & safety matters, venue domestics, course aims and objectives are covered. It also looks at the trainers' presence and starting the session with confidence.
- **How effective was the trainer's use of verbal and non verbal communication skills** - looking at how the trainer interacts with delegates, pace of delivery and appropriateness of language. When appropriate, provision and type of feedback is also reviewed.
- **Questions - Trainers knowledge (including ability to use and deal with questions)** – looking at the trainer's knowledge and understanding of the subject being delivered. Ability to answer questions posed and manage debate with confidence, whilst also using questions to confirm candidate knowledge.
- **Training Environment - How conducive was the training environment** - this looks at the trainer's ability to create a training environment that encourages candidates to feel at ease and interact with the training. It also looks at the trainer's handling of any inappropriate candidate behaviour and trainer's awareness of various learning styles, adapting their training appropriately.

22. A scoring system is used to measure trainer competence and behaviour. A ranking is applied in terms of whether the trainer:

- Exceeds expected levels of performance in most behaviours/outcomes (EM);
- Exceeds expected levels of performance in some behaviours/outcomes (ES);

- Meets expected levels of performance in all behaviours/outcomes (ME);
 - Required development in some behaviours/outcomes (RD); and
 - Requires development in a significant number of behaviours/outcomes (RDS).
23. All 84 classes achieved a ranking of meets expectations (ME) or better for the training environment category.
24. 83 of the 84 classes achieved a ranking of meets expectations (ME) or better for the opening, communication and knowledge categories. The remaining class relates to foam skills training. Babcock have been advised of these scores and a joint follow up audit has been programmed to assess the trainer's knowledge and performance in the delivery of future foam skills training.
25. From the start of September 2012 a computerised course evaluation measurement system has been used which measures delegate's feedback on the training they have received. Delegates score trainer performance, suitability of training materials, venue, equipment and resources using a six point scoring system.
26. For the majority of classes (86.88%) delegates ranked classes a score of 4 (good) and above. The notable exceptions refer to:
- a lack of trainer knowledge on a specific class – a follow up audit for the trainer concerned has been arranged;
 - limited information contained within course joining instructions – Babcock are reviewing content to ensure the instructions are more user friendly;
 - lack of refreshments at Southwark Training Centre (STC) – Babcock are reviewing this matter; and
 - congestion issues at STC where training has been restricted or impeded – Babcock has submitted a business case for the use of the grotto from 1 November which will address these issues.
27. In future performance management information will also be provided on delegate performance against prescribed class pass rates. Whilst this information is currently collated, its accuracy is under review and will be confirmed in time to report from 1 April 2013.
28. The team will continue to meet with Babcock on a weekly basis to highlight areas for improvement and agree remedial actions with associated timelines.

Key performance indicators (KPIs) – performance points to note

29. In addition to the training performance data provided in paragraphs 3 to 9, Babcock's performance is also measured against the key performance indicators (KPIs) contained within the contract's payment mechanism. The payment mechanism comprises 17 KPIs which include performance standards for:
- quality of training facilities, resources, equipment, materials and consumables;

- course administration, design and review;
- delegate pass rates;
- provision and quality of information including maintenance of financial and health and safety records;
- ICT availability;
- business continuity including at least one annual test;
- user satisfaction and complaints procedure; and
- a dedicated help desk function.

30. Each month the KPIs which Babcock have failed to meet are reviewed and the number of associated performance deduction points are calculated. Where monthly performance deduction points amount to 500 or less no financial deductions are applied.

31. The non-public report on today's agenda provides detail of those KPIs which Babcock have failed to meet in quarter 2 together with detail of the resultant financial deductions. The financial deductions have been included in the non- public report as deductions under the contract are described as commercially sensitive information and have therefore been excluded from this report.

Conclusion

32. The operational difficulties Babcock experienced in the first quarter in securing training venue issues was resolved by using some venues outside of the greater London area. Whilst this was accepted on an interim basis, Babcock have been advised that this practice needs to have been resolved by 31 December 2012 and they need to find alternative venues within the London area which meet the travel time criteria set out in the Authority's original requirements.

33. Babcock's performance has improved since the initial training plan was reprogrammed. With the increased use of training at weekends and multiskilling trainers it is anticipated that the revised training delivery programme will be achieved by the end of quarter 4.

Head of Legal and Democratic Services comments

34. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services has no comments.

Director of Finance and Contractual Services comments

35. The Director of Finance and Contractual Services' comments are included in the non-public report.

Sustainability Implications

36. No sustainability or environmental implications were identified in the production of this report.

Staff Side Consultations Undertaken

37. No staff side consultation was undertaken in the preparation of this report.

Equalities Implications

38. No equalities implications were identified in the production of this report.

List of Appendices to this report: none

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	
List of background documents None	
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